



Bishop-elect

The Revd Canon Gregory Cameron was elected as the next Bishop of St Asaph at the meeting of the Electoral College of the Church in Wales on Monday 5 January.

Meet the new bishop on page 2



The Revd Canon Gregory and Mrs Clare Cameron



The Revd Terry Bryan outside St Cynon's church, Tregynon

Canolbwyntio ar Ddeoniaeth

Rural ministry, lay development and mission links. In the first of a new series of articles, we focus on the most southern of our 18 deaneries – Cedewain. See page 11

Also Inside...

- ◆ Around the Diocese – looking towards Easter
- ◆ Funding help – at the touch of a button
- ◆ Night shelter opens
- ◆ Companion link agreement signed in Tanzania
- ◆ Grail Trust – building links in rural south India
- ◆ Wildlife success in Old Colwyn
- ◆ Bishop John's last confirmation

Cyfarfod yr Esgob etholedig

Meet the Bishop-elect

Bishop-elect, the Revd Canon Gregory Cameron, writes,



I write this barely more than twenty-four hours since hearing the news; and the thought of becoming your bishop is as new to me as it is to you. It is forbidding in some ways; not the coming

amongst you, but having to be a worthy ambassador for Jesus Christ, because in so many ways I am just an ordinary disciple of the Lord, and I can't hold out any especial holiness or infallibility for you. But I believe in a God who empowers us and transforms our lives, and I am excited to be joining the adventure of Christian witness as it is

lived amongst this very special family which I and my family have been invited to join.

Ben, my eldest son, aged 11, has asked whether I will be doing more funerals now that I am going to be a bishop. They are important rites of passage, but I hope much more to be talking about life, the life in all its fullness which Jesus spoke about in the Gospel (John 10.10) and which we are all invited to explore, to share, to witness.

Please pray for me, for Clare and the boys, as our lives change. We will come amongst you, looking forward to a warm St Asaph welcome (so far, it has been brilliant) but looking to be of service.

I write in anticipation,

Gregory

Gregory Cameron was born in the valleys of South East Wales, and grew up in the village of Llangybi near Usk in Monmouthshire, where he discovered his faith as a teenager, and started attending the local Anglican Church. He was educated in Croesyceiliog Comprehensive School in Cwmbran. Whilst reading Law at Oxford University he received a vocation to the ordained ministry and, on being accepted as an ordinand of the Church in Wales, began a degree in Theology in Cambridge. Here he was taught early church history by the young Rowan Williams. After studying at St Michael's College, Llandaff, Gregory was ordained in the Diocese of Monmouth, serving in the Parish of St Paul, Newport, and then in the Rectorial Benefice of Llanmartin. Subsequently, he undertook ministry as a school chaplain, at Wycliffe College, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, and as director of an educational charity, The Bloxham Project. In 2000, Rowan Williams, then Archbishop of Wales, appointed Gregory as his Chaplain.

In 2003, he was appointed by the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion as Director of Ecumenical Affairs at the Anglican Communion Office in London, becoming Deputy Secretary General a year later. In this role, he has been involved in the ecumenical relations of the Anglican Communion at global level, and responsible for staffing the Lambeth Commission, which produced the Windsor Report. He has lectured in Old Testament at St Michael's College, Llandaff, and is currently an Honorary Research Fellow in Canon Law at the Centre for Law and Religion in Cardiff University. He was granted an honorary Doctorate of Divinity by the Episcopal Divinity School, Massachusetts, in 2007, in recognition of his contribution to reconciliation in the Anglican Communion.

Gregory is married to Clare, a teacher of music and a composer; they have three sons, aged 11, 9 and 6. Gregory enjoys reading, drawing and calligraphy and is a keen Egyptologist. He is a Welsh learner, and became a fan of Eisteddfodau after winning a scholarship to the Bro Dwyfor Eisteddfod in 1975, although six years living in England have blunted his conversational skills. In all his ministry, he has sought to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ in fresh and exciting ways, and believes that the Christian faith offers hope and profound challenge to the world and to today's society. This does not stop him being a strong devotee of Dr Who!

Please pray for

Gregory Kenneth Cameron

who is to be consecrated as 76th Bishop of St Asaph by Barry, Archbishop of Wales, in the Cathedral Church of SS Peter, Paul, Dyfrig, Teilo and Euddogwy, Llandaff, Cardiff, on Saturday, 4th April, 2009.

He will be welcomed by the Diocese at the Inauguration of his ministry as bishop on Saturday, 25th April, 2009, at the Cathedral Church of St Asaph.

Please remember him, his family and the clergy and people of the Diocese of St Asaph in your prayers.





Special Services & Events

Change for Burma, Solidarity Worldwide/ Partners Relief and Development U.K. tour stops at the Tithe Barn, St Deiniol's Church, Hawarden

- Sunday 8 February at 7 p.m.

Fairtrade Fortnight

- 23 February – 8 March

www.fairtrade.org.uk/fortnight

St Asaph Theological Society; 'The Weakness of God: Language, Power and Liturgy' with the Revd Dr Steven Shakespeare, Lecturer in Philosophy, Liverpool Hope University. At Glyndwr University (formerly NEWI), Wrexham, lecture theatre B26

- Monday 23 February at 7.15 p.m.

Pancake and Prayers for Dyffryn Clwyd deanery youth on Shrove Tuesday in Vestry House, Llanfair Dyffryn Clwyd

- Tuesday 24 February

Contact Revd Richard Carter 01824 703867

Ellesmere College Choral Society perform Handel's 'Messiah' in the Big School, Ellesmere College

- Saturday 14 March at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets £5 (£2 students) 01691 622321

Angel Festival at St Mary's, Welshpool. Organ recital by Andrey Chulovskiy

- Friday 27 March

Church open to view angels on display in church

- Saturday 28 – Sunday 29 March

Contact the Revd Canon Bill Rowell 01938 553164

wkrowell@btinternet.com

TEULUASAPH 4

Consecration of the Revd Canon Gregory Cameron, bishop-elect of St Asaph, at Llandaff Cathedral

Details to follow

- Saturday 4 April

Holy Week and Easter

- Sunday 5 April Palm Sunday

- Thursday 9 April Maundy Thursday

- Friday 10 April Good Friday

- Sunday 12 April Easter Day

Worship in your local parish church or at the Cathedral.

For further details, see the diocesan website:

www.dioceseofstasaph.org.uk

Inauguration of the ministry of the new Bishop of St Asaph, in St Asaph Cathedral - *Details to follow*

- Saturday 25 April

Froncsyllte Male Voice Choir in concert at St Mary's, Chirk

- Thursday 7 May at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets £9 from The Vicarage, Trevor Road, Chirk, Wrexham LL14 5HD

Please enclose cheque payable to St Mary's Church PCC and a S.A.E.

Calling all Artists: start creating your contributions for an exhibition in St Mary's, Mold.

- Monday 4 – Saturday 9 May

Contact Denise Owens 01352 752473 or public1@boltblue.com

Holy Land Pilgrimage

- 18 – 29 October

£1399 per person; contact

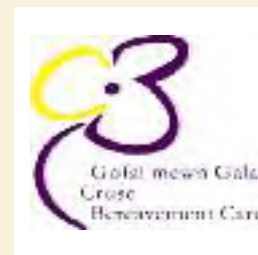
Llanrhos Parish Office 01492 541615

HYSBYSFWRDD NOTICEBOARD

New group offers support in Flintshire

St Marks Church, Connahs Quay, have a new community

based bereavement support /social group which meets on the first Monday of every month between 2 and 4 p.m. Do come along for a cup of tea if you are bereaved; a friend or family member is welcome to come along too. This group has been set up solely for mutual support in loss and is non religious in nature. *Please phone 07986 599330 for further details.*



Funding help at the touch of a button



The Diocesan Office has a long history of supporting parishes who are seeking funding, either for maintenance of buildings or for mission projects. For the past five years, it has been the job of Tracey White, Funding and Parish Support Officer to provide information, encouragement and support in this area. Recently, the Diocese of St Asaph has joined forces with GRANTnet to provide a searchable database of funding opportunities. The service is available via the

Diocesan website

www.dioceseofstasaph.org.uk.

Users simply register their details and obtain a password in order to search the system for funds appropriate to their project.

Tracey explains that parishes will now be able to carry out basic searches themselves across a huge range of funding sources, thanks to the launch of this **free scheme**. "This is an excellent service and provides information about a wide and varied range of funding bodies," she said. "It can be time-consuming finding the right source of funding for your project. This service provides information on the full range of funding opportunities, suitable for all types of projects. It also enables parishes to access application forms directly for our own diocesan funding programmes, such as Church Committee grants, Youth Work grants and Investing In Mission grants.

"Of course I'm still happy to take calls on any project and I would definitely advise parishes embarking on a complex project to get in touch with me directly," advises Tracey "But for routine maintenance and other small projects, I hope that GRANTnet will enable parishes who wish to use it, to move forward at their own pace."

For further information on GRANTnet contact Tracey on 01745 584321

St. Asaph

TEULUASAPH 5

BacktoChurchSunday

How many times have you heard friends or neighbours say, 'Oh, I used to go to church, but ...' If you've ever been away from church for any length of time, you'll know how easy it is to get out of the habit of going and how easy it can be to find other routines to fill the time. Most people who no longer come to church have not given up on God or belief. Back to Church Sunday is an initiative that seeks to invite these people back to church. Quite simply, it does what it says on the tin!

Back to Church Sunday has been running for the last four years throughout various dioceses of the Church of England, and was launched throughout the Baptist Union last year. Evidence from previous years shows that on average 12 extra people will attend on the Sunday. A small but steady growth has been reported in those dioceses Back to Church Sunday has taken place for a few years now.

Back to Church Sunday does not ask for people to stand on street corners and invite people in. It relies on members of churches giving printed invitations to friends and neighbours, inviting them back to church on a certain date. The church is not required to put on any

spectacular event or special performance. On the day, the church makes an extra effort to be especially user friendly, makes sure welcome packs are available and that a smiling greeting is there. It's simple. Why not try it yourself?

Back to Church Sunday in 2009 is Sunday 27th September.

For more information, see www.backtochurch.co.uk, or speak to the Revd Vittoria Hancock, Diocesan Evangelism Officer 01745 730176

Walking on Water

Praying through art and colour.

Retreat on Bardsey Island, led by Revd Jessica Aidley, fed by Liz Suter.

June 20 - 27

Contact Jessica Aidley 01600 713075

j.aidley@googlemail.com

www.carregtrust.org.uk/index.html

or Bookings Secretary

Revd Nick Hawkins, Bryn Mor, Llangwnadl, Pwllheli LL53 8NS 01758 770582



Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch Association

in April this year were successful in tendering for the 50+ Forum development Project, funded through The Older People's Strategy in Flintshire by Flintshire County Council. Ella Ellis is the 50+ Forum Development Worker employed by Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch Association. The main aim of Ella's work is to assist in the setting up of new 50+ Forums throughout Flintshire, providing support with accessing funding, training and information.

If any 50+ groups/clubs or individuals are interested in hearing more about 50+ Forum Development, or would like to know how 50+ forums can be of benefit in your area, please contact Ella Ellis at Flintshire Neighbourhood Watch Association. 01352 708118

Ella.ellis@fnwa.org.uk



Easter Breakfast Events to raise funds for Mercy Ships.

Can you organize an Easter breakfast to bring hope to the horizon and healing for those in greatest need? Join with friends, neighbours and colleagues and enjoy breakfast and fellowship together for a great cause!

Mercy Ships operates the world's largest charity hospital ship delivering free health care and development services. Funds raised will make a lifelong difference to individuals and communities, not only restoring them physically, but enabling them to rejoin at school or at work, showing their healing and new hope, found through Mercy Ships.

Every amount counts;

£6 can help deliver a dental check up; £15 can provide a month's physiotherapy; £29 can help straighten cross eyes; £72 can help wipe away a cleft lip and palate; £100 can provide a cataract operation; £297 can build a well.

To find out more and for an Easter Breakfast Pack visit www.mercyships.org.uk/easter-breakfast or phone 01438 727800



The Revd Aidan Coleman, organiser with TCC, reports on the opening of the Night Shelter, which was supported by the Diocesan Offering 2007.

Wrexham emergency night shelter, now named Ty Nos, opened on the night of December 12th, following three years of community organising work by Together Creating Communities (TCC). In October 2005 one of TCC's member groups, Capel y Groes, asked TCC for help because rough sleepers were using the grounds of their chapel and sheltered porch to bed down for the night. TCC's research quickly identified the absence of any night time shelter in Wrexham for rough sleepers.

Ty Nos will provide a bed and a warm meal for up to twelve men and four women and has secured Welsh Assembly and Wrexham Borough Council funding for three years. It will be run by the Clwyd Alyn Housing Association and is housed in a former community centre on Holt Road in Wrexham.

The night shelter project was the focus of the St Asaph Diocesan Offering in 2007 and conversations have already taken place and will continue between TCC and Clwyd Alyn as to the appropriate ways in which the Diocesan Offering can be used to directly benefit and be of value to rough sleepers in ways that the statutory funding doesn't allow.



Revd Aidan Coleman and Andy Roberts, Supported Living Manager with Clwyd Alyn, at Ty Nos.

At a public assembly in St Margaret's Church hall in Wrexham on December 5th, attended by 150 TCC members and supporters, the imminent opening of Ty Nos was celebrated in the presence of Wrexham Borough Council leader Aled Roberts and senior management from Clwyd Alyn, amongst others. At that assembly the words of a former rough sleeper were read out, "In April 2007 I was very glad to use the temporary night shelter on Grosvenor Road and I know how much having it open meant to many of the other rough sleepers who used it. I'm very blessed that my life is now back on track, but having experienced first hand life on the streets I remain deeply concerned about just how hard it is for those sleeping rough to keep body and soul together, particularly during the winter months. A man's health can be broken beyond repair and I know men whose lives have been cut tragically short by trying to survive without a roof. This shelter, make no mistake about it, is going to help keep people alive.

So on behalf of all those men and women who will use the shelter and whose lives will be safer for it, I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to secure the permanent shelter and get it open before Christmas. Sadly there will be no shortage of clients but people are telling me how much they are looking forward to having the shelter back - and, now, not temporary, but permanent."

And thank you to you, too.



Companion Link between the Diocese of St Asaph and the Diocese of South West Tanganyika

Canon Bill Rowell reports that the link agreement signed by Bishop John on Tuesday 4th November was sent to Tanzania, where it was signed at the Diocesan Conference on 22nd November (as pictured). The Link states that,



"Our purpose in making this Companion Link is to journey together as brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing in our pilgrimage of faith and discipleship. We shall therefore wish to work in partnership as equals, while at the same time recognising our distinctiveness, and respecting our cultural heritage and identities."

The Link, which is for an initial period of five years, seeks to support the mission and ministry of both dioceses and includes a commitment to prayer for one another as well as the sharing of ideas and information. Canon Bill Rowell is convening a Link Committee and would welcome expressions of interest in this and in plans for a visit to South West Tanganyika in early August.

You can contact him on 01938 553164 wkrowell@btinternet.com

Bishop John Simalenga has sent his greetings to the Diocese, saying,

"We are praying with you at this time as you wait for your new bishop. We hope we can plan exchange visits and other events of partnership as from next year. With love and prayers, Bishop John."

Introducing The Grail Trust; helping children and building links in rural South India

Most of us are aware of the enormous divides that separate those who are comfortably off and the very poor across the world. We hear of great economic progress in India, but we can forget that this is mostly limited to the larger urban conurbations. We may not realise that 75.6% of the population live on less than \$2 a day, or £1.33, according to World Bank reports. This means that India with its huge population has the largest number of people living in extreme poverty and the consequential problems as compared with any other any country in the world.

In 1996 The Grail Trust, a registered charity, started a home in the village of Chinnampalpuram, in the state of Tamilnadu, only 30 miles from Kanya Kumari, the southern tip of India. It's a rural area mainly dependent on agriculture (but with unpredictable rainfall), where there is much real poverty. We now have 100 children in our care, from a great variety of situations and needs, and many more applications than we are able to respond to. We have many orphan children, and many who come from poor and destitute backgrounds, often with heart-pulling stories. Children attend local schools and are given the opportunity for vocational training. Some of our students go on to higher education. The intention is to give them opportunity for independence and a good future.

We value our links with the local community – and also the local church, part of the Church of South India, set up in 1947 and part of the wider Anglican Communion. We see the Grail Trust Home as a partnership scheme where we can learn from and be enriched by each other. We work with our partner organisation, Grail Trust (India), made up of trustees local to the area.



Ambika, Murugammal and Selvi in their school uniform, having washed up their dishes after breakfast, with the Grail Trust Home in the background

The Grail Trust Home is a happy place, as anyone visiting will discover, where we aim to give the best support and encouragement we can, and to make our resources go as far as possible. Essential commodities are cheaper in India, but costs are rising. The people are wonderfully friendly and appreciative, although they don't seem to see 'trickle down' effect from Indian economic growth. We know that if we can help one individual, we can help a family; and where we can help a family we can help that local community. One of our former students, who went to college and now has an excellent job in the computer world, summed it all up by saying "I owe so much to the Grail Trust. I am so grateful."

Revd Jonathan Robinson, who lives near Montgomery, is the director and founder of the Trust, and Dr Max Gibbs, who attends the church in Corwen, is the Chair of the Trust. Jonathan is always glad to give a talk or presentation about the Grail Trust and its work, and to encourage links and support with parishes and the diocese.

*Jonathan can be contacted at
Grail Barn, Great Argoed, Mellington, Montgomery, Powys SY15 6TH
Tel: 01588 620779*



Deanery Focus Canolbwyntio ar Ddeoniaeth

Beginning a new series of articles looking at the work of our deaneries, we focus on Cedewain Deanery. Wendy Gardner puts us in the picture.

The most southerly deanery in the Diocese, Cedewain is also a pioneer of collaborative ministry. Its 50 square miles, set in the upper reaches of the Severn Valley in North Powys, is mainly rural, but its hub is Newtown which was designated a 'new town' in the 1970s, and has since tripled in size, and is now the largest town in Powys.

In the 1970s a scheme was drawn up to enable rural clerics to help in the town and for all to move freely around the Deanery. Individual parishes retain their own identity and PCCs, but clerics and Readers are licensed to serve in all parishes in the deanery. The Deanery Conference has equal lay representation from all parishes, and draws up the annual budget, monitors clergy expenses and pays the deanery 'fair share'. Initially, the 11 churches (now 10) were covered by 4 stipendiary clergy helped by 4 Readers, 5 worship leaders and 2 retired priests. Everyone on the team preached in a different church each month.



A view over Newtown

In recent years, collaborative lay ministry has really grown; full time clergy numbers have reduced to just 2 but we are now supported by a non-stipendiary curate and a house-for-duty cleric, 6 Readers and over a dozen worship leaders and pastoral assistants.

Julia Lane presents a Reader's view of life in the Deanery.

As Readers, we are very blessed in this Deanery to be accepted as full members of the Chapter team, and to be involved in the planning and decision making for the work of the Deanery; lay ministry is regarded as being on a par with the ordained ministry. Indeed, many services would not happen at all were it not for the fact that

we are a team, and are able to lead worship at any church within the Deanery as needed. Others members of the team are our highly respected group of retired clergy; we owe them a huge debt of gratitude for the vast amount of work they did during the recent vacancy in the Kerry group of parishes.

We are reaping the benefit now of Cedewain Deanery's pioneering 'collaborative ministry'; interregnums are easier to manage for everyone because we all know each other and it will be a familiar face arriving from somewhere else in the Deanery. It is very good for us, as Readers, to be affirmed in our ministry in this way, and to be able to contribute fully to the ongoing work and mission to which we have all been called.

The Deanery is privileged to have the help of a 'retired' priest in charge, covering three of the parishes in the deanery. The Revd Terence Bryan has a few thoughts on 'house for duty' (sort of).

Taking responsibility for three tiny rural parishes was the last thing my wife, Jacqui, and I had on our minds when we moved into the benefice. Being able to sit together in church, and doing the odd spot of locum work, was how we saw retirement. But then our Vicar retired. A request came; could I, with Peter, another retired priest from the village, and Clive, our excellent Reader, possibly hold the fort until Easter? Of course, we said. Then, before Easter, another approach was made. Would I consider becoming the part-time, honorary priest in charge? Sundays - plus two weekdays, perhaps?



After prayer, and discussion with my wife and family, we decided that this must be the right thing to do if, in this way, the parishes could be kept together, active, and feeling cared for. So, for the past eighteen months we have been involved in this sort of 'house-for-duty' ministry. The 'sort of' bit arises from the fact that we already had our house!

To maintain the service pattern, the continuing help from Peter and from Clive is absolutely invaluable. In addition, three people have been commissioned as Worship Leaders, including Jacqui who looks after All Age Worship in two parishes. One of my 'parish duty' weekdays is a 'dog collar day', when I make every effort to be available. Urgent calls, in person or by phone, however, can and should be made at any time. The second 'duty day' can be any day of the week, depending on need. Once a month, this is the time when I take the Blessed Sacrament to the housebound.

Something else which makes the whole thing workable is the tremendous support from Church officers and PCCs, which are chaired by laity. They have undertaken much of the work concerning buildings and fund raising. Several times a year we have joint meetings for the three parishes, when anyone is welcome to come and make suggestions for services or parish happenings. This has already led to a beneficial 'tweaking' of our fifth Sunday joint services, and, last year, a "Safari Service", when members of the three congregations moved from church to church for a Eucharist celebrated in three parts.

So, does house-for-duty ministry work? In most circumstances, the minister will be 'a priest of a certain age'; this may not always be ideal, especially where children and young people are concerned, but grandparents are quite popular with children; so if "Father" is a bit more like "Grandfather(!)" then maybe all is not lost after all! It obviously means that those same parishes are under 'part-time' care; but it also means that house-for-duty parishes do have a priest they can call their own and one who lives, normally, within the benefice, someone parishioners can get to know.

House-for-duty is not a ministry for everyone. There are a host of good reasons why retired clergy may wish to remain retired, perhaps just helping out here and there as the occasion demands, and this should always be respected. But for those who do feel called to 'extended duties', here is a very practical way of helping the church at this time; and Jacqui and I are enjoying it immensely.

Cedewain Deanery is focused on mission and helping others outside our churches. Over the years the Deanery has supported a number of projects.

❖ **Children's Holiday club.**

Having established a good after school club in one of our churches we decided some years ago to hold a summer school during one week of the school holidays. It was a great success, was opened to the whole of the Deanery and is now an annual event. Children and helpers come from many of the communities of the Deanery and the Deanery finances the club.



Local PC Graham Jennings visited the club

Children and helpers come from many of the communities of the Deanery and the Deanery finances the club.

The course has lots of fun; craft, drama, music, games and, of course, food and drink! Many topics have been covered, including Paul's journeys (and shipwreck), a walk with the Saints (David, Patrick and Andrew), exploring the planets (and learning about creation) and survival (and the art of prayer).

As a result, the children have grown in faith and understanding - but in a medium which, hopefully, will help to make it stick!

❖ **Teenagers Together** began with 4 or 5 teenagers aged about 13 or 14 in a local church; the group has blossomed to over 20 in a matter of 18 months. The club is open to all teenagers in the Deanery. Activities are both social and religious. Discussion is important. The club members have supported one local and one national charity each year - raising funds through different ideas of their own. Several of them are confirmed (age range is now 11 to 17) but there is opportunity for others to learn and become more active in their faith. They read and take



prayers in their own churches on a regular basis and help with sidesmen and tea duties.

Recently they put together a service for their own use to finish the term and it is hoped they will take a service for the church community before too long. They are an enthusiastic bunch and social activities have included making a meal for friends and families and going to the bowling alleys in Shrewsbury and Newtown.

❖ **Malawi.** The Cedewain Deanery has for over 25 years had a link with Lake Malawi Diocese. In August 1983, Archdeacon David Banda from Malawi began his placement in the Deanery, based in Newtown. Early in 1985, the Deanery raised funds to provide Archdeacon Banda with a motor cycle

to help him travel more quickly around the archdeaconry. In 1985 a party from the Deanery visited Malawi. The Deanery still supports work in Malawi, financing education and water schemes.

❖ **'An Open Door'** is supported financially and prayerfully by the Deanery. Their work is to take care of vulnerable children. After stabilising their condition and getting them back to good health, we try to find family members that we can resettle the child with. We are currently working in the UK, Uganda, India and Rwanda. One of their workers, Bethan (pictured here with her husband, Horace Muhabuzi), comes from Aberhafesp in the Deanery and she is a link missionary for a number of the parishes within the Deanery.



❖ At home the Deanery is very active in supporting the **Montgomery Family Crisis Centre**. The Mothers Union in the deanery led the support, but this has grown to include the wider church. The Crisis centre provides safehouse accommodation to victims of abuse as well as helping with perpetrators. It also provide the only male safehouse in Wales. The centre relies on voluntary help and voluntary sector funding and recently needed emergency help with food for the Christmas period. The churches of the deanery helped, overwhelming expectations. The links are so close that both the Mothers Union Deanery President and the Area Dean are directors of the Centre.



David Curtis reports on an award winning garden at St John the Baptist Church, Old Colwyn.

A partnership with the local residents' association in Old Colwyn was formed in September 2004. The original concept was to replace the old hedge with metal railings as the original ones had been removed for the war effort. Permission to remove the hedge in a conservation area required the introduction of wildlife habitat. It was considered a fitting location to have a wildlife garden.

Now the garden has benefited from over 4000 hours of community voluntary work and over £33,000 from a variety of funding sources.

Two of the three seats in the garden were placed by the project; also, two litter bins. Bird and bat boxes were introduced. The trees were trimmed and also part of the path around the church was reinstated. A butterfly garden was introduced with a butterfly interpretation panel. Various borders were introduced and stocked with native plants donated by Conwy Council Parks and Gardens Department. Shrubs and plants were also donated from local people and other sources.

An interpretation panel has been installed in the garden to explain the project and detail some of the history of the church. The garden is appreciated by both local people and visitors as a wonderful centre to the village. It has



been visited by a number of groups intending to develop their own garden projects and has been a source of inspiration. Moreover, the garden has enhanced the appearance of the church significantly and is a popular venue for weddings and other family services.

Over three years, the garden has been successful in the Snowdonia Wildlife Garden, Wales in Bloom, Tidy Wales, Green Pennant and Colwyn in Bloom competitions. A warm welcome is extended to all visitors; or visit www.oldcolwyneast.co.uk

Send any thoughts, on this or any other related subject, to Revd Adrian Copping, on behalf of the Diocesan Ecology Group - adriancopping@hotmail.com

The Rectory, 8, Ludlow Road, Bangor Isycoed, Wrexham, LL13 0JG

☎ 01978 780608



St Mary's Church, **Welshpool**, launched a new 'Fresh Expressions' venture on Sunday 28th September. Taking place in Church House, the parish's well-



equipped church hall facility, 'Family and Friends' is aimed at families with young children, but is designed to be accessible to everyone. "Our inspiration was the Messy Church idea pioneered by a parish in Portsmouth," said Canon Bill Rowell, Vicar of Welshpool, "as it seemed to suit exactly a church hall facility like ours." Family & Friends will take place at 4 p.m. on the 4th Sunday of the month, with craft, cookery, drama, games, worship and fellowship all offered as part of the mix. As the first meeting coincided with the parish Harvest Festival weekend, the theme for the day was thanksgiving and generosity.

Four activities were on offer as people arrived - making print pictures and patterns, a collage table, making "Day Three Kebabs" (fruit on a stick) and a general activity table with colouring sheets, plasticine, games, and jigsaws. Everyone did at least two activities, after which they moved to the worship area for a short praise service (using Powerpoint) which included one of the

Vicar's 'Mr Twistleton' stories, two harvest songs, and simple prayers. After the worship time came eating and drinking time, giving some very wet and sticky artwork time to dry on the tables.

The small organising team headed by Sandra Bartley and Bill Rowell declared themselves to be very pleased with the response to this first meeting, which they described as "a good base from which to grow".



Brother and sister Heidi and Dyfan Breeze are shown after the September Confirmation Service at **Llangedwyn** Church. Heidi was confirmed by Bishop John at the Deanery service last year and Dyfan this year.



Billy the Regimental Goat of the 1st Royal Welsh Battalion attended the annual PDSA Animal Blessing Service at the Parish Church of St Giles, **Wrexham**, on Sunday 5th October. Billy, pictured here with the Goat Major and the Revd Matt Wilkinson, appeared in full regalia with gilded horns.

St Asaph Cathedral chorister Anwen Hughes reached the finals stage in the "BBC Radio 2 Young Chorister of the year 2008" held at the end of October in St Paul's Cathedral. The eight finalists (four girls and four boys) were selected from choristers all around the UK to participate in



the competition. The final was recorded in front of a packed nave of around 2000 people and broadcast on BBC Radio 2. Celebrity judges were Andrew Carwood, Carrie Grant and Tim Rhys-Evans. Sixteen year old Anwen has been a chorister in St Asaph Cathedral Girls' Choir for six years.

The Trustees of the **Archbishop Rice Jones Charitable Trust** have taken decisions about the first group of grants they are making - grants which can be made because of the response of the Diocese to their appeals for funds. Decisions were based on applications received and, as a result, they are distributing almost £1000 to schools right across the Diocese, Welsh medium and English medium, to support their own projects which develop religious education and collective worship. The types of project supported range from Faith Gardens to the purchase of Jewish and Christian Artefacts.

In taking their decisions, they look for evidence that the projects are supported by the local community, PCC or other funding, as well as forming part of the school's own curriculum development plan.

"This really is good news," say the Trustees, "and thanks to the Trust, religious, education and collective worship in Schools across the Diocese will benefit in very practical ways."

St Mary's Church, **Mold**, hosted a hymnathon in November. "Our aim was to sing hymns and make music to praise the Lord all day from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Quite a tall order, but we did it!" reports organiser Sheila Wilson. The Church was

full of music with hymns chosen and sponsored by St Mary's congregation and members of Mold Choral Society; sacred and popular items from Buzz Ahh and The Drew Singers; informal worship provided by Michael Skinner and Cathy Pugh; and violin solos by George Morris, aged 11. Our two organists, Tim Stuart and Philip Knowles, provided inspirational accompaniment and solos. Worship songs were played during the lunch break and a delicious array of refreshments was provided by Denise Owens and her team. With the encouragement of our Mayor, Andrea Mearns, who gave out fliers in town, many visitors dropped in and stayed for quite a while.

Sheila said, "I had asked for a miracle as it was the first time we had done anything like this, and I certainly got one." Approximately £400 has been raised so far. Sheila says that a few people from other churches have expressed interest in doing a hymnathon. "Wouldn't it be wonderful for lots of churches all round the Diocese to do the same; make a joyful noise to the Lord. I myself was inspired by the event organised by John Blomfield at St James' Church, Holywell, last year. It was so enjoyable I had to do one for St Mary's. I will be happy to pass on the benefit of my experience if any one is interested." Call Sheila Wilson 01352 757957 rogerwilson@tesco.net

St Ffraid's in **Llansantffraid ym Mechain** organised a road race - and off road race for children - in November. Pictured is Ellis Davies from Llansantffraid collecting his medal from one of the



sponsors, Mrs Jan Williams of Bryn Vyrnwy Caravan Site. Ian Davies from Newtown Harriers came in first, running 4.9 miles in just over 23 minutes. Well done to all our competitors and church members who marshalled, recorded results and provided the hot dogs!

Camouflage netting and sandbags were the unlikely adornments in St Deiniol's Church in **Hawarden** during the Remembrance weekend. They formed the entrance to a wartime memorabilia exhibition that was part of the 'Hawarden at War' event when six speakers told the stories behind the bare facts of the wartime exploits of local residents. The facts were recorded on memorials and plaques within the Church, some going back to the Civil War, and about four hundred attentive listeners were present over the two-day event.

The memorabilia exhibition attracted a lot of interest as this contained a variety of mainly World War II weapons and clothing together with old ration books and details of the meagre weekly rations allowed in those days. Local residents had also given their accounts of their



memories of wartime, either as civilians or serving members of H.M Forces. Invitations to the exhibition were sent to local schools and the pupils who attended seemed impressed by the way people lived through that grim time when the freedom of our country was threatened.

Some excellent refreshments served in the nearby Tithebarn complemented the event. Geoffrey Williams says, "We would like to thank those people who did attend and helped to raise a sum of over £1000 pounds, which was shared equally between the Church and the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association."

"St. Mary's Church, **Broughton & Bretton**, is on the move!" reports the Revd Mike Douglas. "Not the building, but the members who make up the church. On the morning of Sunday 16th November we held the last service before moving out to allow the building to be reordered." It was a special service of thanksgiving, which ended with the vicar leading the choir and congregation out, the doors being shut and the peace shared in front of the church building (pictured below).

The people of the church have moved to Broughton Community Centre, where midweek and Sunday services are now being held. A leaflet drop was organised



to the houses in Broughton and Bretton informing the residents about what was happening.

The reordering has been made possible with money from the sale of the church hall. The aim is to provide facilities that meet the needs of the 21st century and resource the mission of the church - whilst retaining features of historic importance. The scheme involves providing a kitchen, toilets, a 'narthex' area, stairs, lift and a new meeting room upstairs. The pews are being removed and replaced by chairs so that the space can be used more flexibly. The church plans to set up a coffee shop in the narthex, which, together with the other facilities, will permit more use of the building by the wider community.

"We hope to be back in the building towards the end of April," says the Revd Mike Douglas. "What will things be like when we return? Improved, but different. As a fellowship we will also have changed through being church elsewhere. St. Mary's will have moved on, to better serve the needs of the church and community now and in the foreseeable future."

Representatives of the congregations of the parishes of Llansanffraid Glan Conwy, Eglwysbach, Llanrwst, Llanrhos and friends from St David's College, Llandudno were present at a packed St

Bishop John confirming Chelsie Jones and her mother Jacqueline Jones



Ffraid's Church, **Glan Conwy** to witness Bishop John's final confirmation service before his retirement, when 13 candidates - children, young people and adults - were confirmed. During the distribution of communion, Canotrion Llansanffraid (Glan Conwy's Church Choir), under the direction of organist Dr Dafydd Kendrick, sang a number of bilingual pieces.

Following the service a feast of 'Welsh Hospitality' was served in Church House; farewells were said to the Bishop and best wishes offered to him on his forthcoming retirement.

A few years ago, the Rector of **Denbigh**, the Revd Jonathan Smith, devised a prayer diary featuring different prayers for each day with a community theme. In the course of any one month every street, organisation, church and community service in Denbigh is prayed for by name. The diary is used during intercessions in public worship in St. Mary's and Marcella's and also more widely in the other churches in Denbigh.

Following this, it was felt that further outreach to the community was desirable. After an inspiring meeting with Sharon Clayton and Barbara Bell, both of whom work with young people



in Canolfan Seion, it was felt that the Churches in Denbigh should support the work of the Young Carers' Group. As an initial step it was decided that the churches should raise money to buy Christmas presents and fund festivities for the Young Carers, who do such a good job caring for their families in difficult circumstances.

On December 3rd the Rector was able to hand over a cheque for £550 to the Young Carers' Group. It is hoped that this is only a first step in the process of closer cooperation between the churches and the wider community in Denbigh.

A very successful Christmas Tree Festival in **Flint** got off to a flying start with a Festival of Carols and an inspiring sermon by the Archdeacon of St Asaph, the Ven Bernard Thomas on the 5th December, when he dedicated a mural

depicting the Nativity Scene. Forty Two Christmas Trees where on display sponsored by local businesses or organisations. The Church was open for five days every week in the run up to Christmas, helping to bring the true meaning of Christmas home to many children and adult visitors.

The Church House, **Glan Conwy** was a real hive of activity on Wednesday afternoons through Advent. Twenty local children, aged between 4 and 8, came to discover the story behind Christ's birth and

what Christians believe this means for the world through stories, play and craft. The idea grew from the challenge thrown down by the Rector, the Revd Christine Owen, that the congregation at St Ffraid's should not be afraid to teach the Christian message in the local community.



So with Sugar Paper, glue, paint, glitter and a great deal of trepidation, Warden James Berry and PCC member Trish

Knight, with leadership and help from the Rector, accepted the challenge and set up the sessions and hoped that at least a couple of kids would turn up. In the event, they were overwhelmed by the response and, more than that, the willingness of parents to stay and help. In a packed parish room, adults and children had a great time. Over the four weeks, we explored the promise of the prophets and the Christmas story and the children created their own banner to hang in church to tell the story of Advent and Christmas and to explain what they had been doing.

As James and Trish explained to other Church members, this was "not a recruitment drive" but it was a chance to explain why Christians see Christmas as so important.

On Sunday 21st December, the children and their families were invited to church to a family-oriented Eucharist and each child was presented with a certificate; the Mothers' Union kindly paid for a book for each child as a Christmas gift.

And that's not the end of it. The group now has a name, "Clwb Llan", and it reflects the community, in that the majority of children don't come to church. There are children from other Christian traditions; it welcomes the able and disabled and is bilingual. The "Clwb" plans to meet again for four weeks beginning Ash Wednesday to "Learn through Lent".

The Revd Carole Poolman reports that they did something slightly different at **Pontblyddyn** this year. "Mary and

Joseph (our crib figures) decided that staying in Church (especially in a cardboard box) during Advent is boring - so they went on a journey. Originally they were just going to go to the homes of the Sunday 'Fun House' children, but then a few other children joined in, the school asked for a visit, and the head teacher wanted to take them home to see his children. When they eventually arrived back in church for 'The Christmas Crackers Service' (one of our Carol Services) they'd been to all their scheduled stops and quite a few others in-between. Their hosts enjoyed having them so much that we plan to do it again next year."

The parish has also received a grant of £2000 from the Archbishop's Children's Fund to help equip their children's ministry. It will pay for crèche equipment and teaching aids for both 'Fun House' (a Pontblyddyn group of under 10s) and 'Wednesday Wonders' (a combined group of teenagers from both Llanfynydd & Pontblyddyn Parishes).

The Christmas Tree Festival that took place over the weekend of 13th & 14th December at St Mary's Church, **Llanfair D.C.**, certainly caught the imagination of the local community! This was a first - and following its success it could become an annual event. There were over 20 individual trees brought in to decorate the church as well as the 12 foot traditionally decorated tree that arrives each Christmas. Quirky designs such as that from the Ladies Sports Club composed of gilded badminton rackets and shuttle cocks, a fan of bare twigs hung with jewel-like decorations and a



beautifully detailed embroidered hanging, were amongst the outstanding

exhibits. On the Sunday morning, church was bustling as visitors poured in to take part in a short service of celebration of the Christmas Tree and enjoy the fellowship of examining the exhibits over mince pies and steaming cups of coffee.

The World-Wide President of **Mothers' Union**, Mrs Rosemary Kempshall (pictured, seated, second from the right), who lives in Surrey, paid a four day visit to North Wales, spending two days in Bangor Diocese and two in St Asaph. On Sunday 14th December she visited Plas Bellin, near Mold, where she saw a Nativity play and attended a service. She then moved on to have tea in Northop



with members of the Mold and Holywell Deaneries. As a handbell ringer herself, she joined the Northop handbell ringers for a while.

On Monday morning a children's Christmas party run by the Mothers' Union branch in Mold welcomed her, before she travelled to meet members from the Wrexham area for lunch in Rhostyllen Community Hall, where the Wrexham Deanery Mothers' Union Choir performed. Mrs Kempshall then travelled to St John's Church, Pool Quay, for an Advent Service, before returning to watch the Nativity play at Rhosymedre Junior School, Wrexham.

On Tuesday, she was given a tour of the Llangollen area before joining the Diocesan MU Trustee Body for lunch at Rossett Hall Hotel.

During her three-year term of office, she has already visited Canada, Uganda, Nigeria and Australia and will visit other countries as well.

From North Wales Police Neighbourhood Policing Team

Dear Reader,

Most people who call at your home will be genuine. But sometimes, people turn up unannounced, with the intention of tricking their way into your home. They are known as 'distraction burglars' or 'cold callers', whose only aim is to distract people to gain access into peoples homes and steal their money or valuables. You should always be aware when someone you don't know calls at your door.

Here is a list of do's and don'ts:-

- Do keep your door chain attached when answering the door. If you have not got a chain, contact your local Neighbourhood watch coordinator.
- Don't invite them into your home without checking their ID; get phone confirmation if required. If they are genuine they will be happy to cooperate.
- Don't keep large amounts of cash in the house.
- Don't store anything in your car.
- If somebody attends at your address and informs you of a problem with your property, get in touch with a local reputable builder for a second opinion or ask a friend's advice.

Teulu Asaph Sharing Good News with the Family of the Diocese

Editor: Revd Peter Mackriell, Diocesan Communications Officer.
Diocesan Office, High Street, St. Asaph LL17 ORD 01745 582245
petermackriell@churchinwales.org.uk

What is your good news? Let us know what is happening in your parish or deanery. Interesting photographs and short articles particularly welcome.
Croesewir unrhyw erthyglau ynglyn a digwyddiadau eglwysig yn Gymraeg. Gellir cynnwys crynodeb byr o'r erthygl, na ddylai fod yn fwy na 250 o eiriau, yn Saesneg. Diolch yn fawr.

Deadlines: April/May edition: **23rd February**
June/July edition: **27th April**